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NOVA SCOTIA Government of Nova Scotia

The Art and Science of Pattern Cutting

Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)
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Tents, sails and corsets have something in common: from two-dimensional shapes they are made into forms with volume.

Halifax architects Sarah Bonnemaison and Christine Macy have taken these three forms and used them as a focus for an investigation of pattern-making.

The result is an exhibition titled Nature's Tailor: The Art and Science of Pattern Cutting. It opens May 14 at the Mary E. Black Gallery, Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design, 1683 Barrington St., Halifax.

Sails have changed through the ages in response to ship design. You don't have to be a sailor to realize that the shapes of the sails on a square-rigger are different from the sails on a fore and aft rigged ship such as the Bluenose. Why is that? Because the sails have to work in a different way and the forces on them are different.

Tents vary from the family camping variety to the huge structures designed for pavilions at Expo. And the corset? Not just the butt of music-hall jokes, the corset was designed to force women's bodies into conformity with a notion of what was "natural" or "perfect."

In all cases, though, the design begins with a pattern.

The exhibition, continuing to July 4, includes a ship's portrait, models on loan from the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, and examples of tents and corsets.

The Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays.

The centre is a program and resource centre of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture and is operated by the department's Cultural Affairs Division. The centre is a catalyst in the development of designers and craft persons; it also functions as a visitor destination site.

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